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## The psycho-social impact of the Olympic Winter Games organization on the Romanian tourism

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### Abstract

**Problem Statement:** The touristic industry is one of the most important economical branches in the world, with a psycho-social impact on the population, in which the sports tourism would attract funds for our country, and it would favour intercultural changes and social contacts between peoples with a positive effect for the image of Romania in the world. The cultural program is based on the existence of a multi-cultural history in Braşov and the connections with Ancient Greece and old civilizations of the Romanian territory. Activities should be planned under the form of a Cultural Olympic event (2018-2021), with different themes for each year, different locations, which will speak about the history of the Romanian people.

**Purpose of Study:** The study has been initiated in Romania, starting from the research undertaken regarding the psycho-social impact, the history, the geography, the people and the IOC regulation (International Olympic Committee). All of the competitive and non-competitive facilities will be finished two years before the organization of the Olympic Winter Games. During this period, the mentioned facilities will be tested by the committee, in order to establish their conformity with the IOC standards and the modifications which have to be made for a better development of the competition. A good manner of testing these facilities, regarding the psycho-social impact, is the organization of world championships for the winter games.

**Research Methods:** Bibliographic method; Observation method; Enquiry method (conversation, etc.); Statistical-mathematical method; Graphical method.

**Findings:** The present research started from the assumption that due to the world economical crisis, a new perspective is brought in the forth, having a psycho-social impact on the organization of big sports events, although profit is no longer guaranteed. In spite of this, a “bluffing” participation may bring great image benefits.

**Conclusions:** The organizers have to convince great corporations that it is a good idea to invest in the Olympic Games which have a psycho-social impact, felt within the masses on each level: economical, social, moral, educational. The organization of the Olympic Winter Games does not require a financial effort as big as the one needed of the organization of the Olympic Summer Games. Furthermore, the first is developed under the sign of sports, spirit of combat and fair-play.

**Keywords:** *psycho-social impact, Olympic Winter Games, subjects, sports tourism, tourism*

### 1. Introduction

Tourism is the economic branch with the greatest psycho-social impact over the people, in which sports tourism would attract funds towards our country, and would favour intercultural exchanges and social contacts between

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peoples, with a positive effect on the image of Romania in the world. The incomes from the touristic activities can become real economic bridges with effects of psycho-social involvement. “Implications of the touristic activities in the structure of other economic branches offer tourism the character of a branch of interference and, in the same time, it gives complexity to the newly formed bonds between tourism and the other economical branches. Thus, tourism acts as a dynamic element of the global economic system.”(Minciu R., *Tourism Economy*, Uranus Publishing House, Bucharest, 2001, p. 26) The economic crisis experienced by the entire European continent, as well as our country, can be an impulse for touristic and sports promotion, which have the great quality of completing each other, and of bringing financial, cultural and social benefits to our country. As a consequence, at the realisation of the touristic product, many factors participate: buildings, thermo-electrical energy, automobile construction industry, electronic and electro-technical industry, wood and textile industry, agriculture, merchandise circulation, communication, culture, medical assistance, transportations and sports.

## 2. Hypothesis

The present research started from the hypothesis that, due to the world economic crisis, there is a new perspective gazing at the horizon, with a positive psycho-social impact on the people, because of the organization of great sports events, although profit is no longer guaranteed. In spite of this, “bluffing” participation can bring great image benefits.

## 3. Methods

*3.2. Research methods:* Bibliographic study method; Observation method; Investigation method (ancheta etc); Pedagogical experiment method; Statistical-mathematic method; Graphical method.

*3.3. Research purpose* The purpose of the undertaken research was that of investigating and offering directing lines, in order to develop sports tourism, concentrating on three perspectives, economical, political, and socio-cultural. **Important –our action has a conclusive purpose, rather than a researching one.**

## 4. Research tasks

Approaching the issue of the chosen theme, the paper aims as following:

- Completing field literature, with data about sports-tourism, a less studied subject until this moment, attracting the attention of specialists on the existence of a bond between “two great industries” – tourism and sports, which have the quality of completing each other, and of bringing material, cultural and social benefits.
- The SWOT analysis – for the Prahova Valley area. Foreseeing the touristic potential of Romania, and the psycho-social impact registered after the organization of the Olympic Winter Games (XXIV Edition), from 2022.
- Conceiving a questionnaire on a randomly chosen group of 100 people, with the purpose of observing and identifying the series of factors if the psycho-social impact on the population, as a consequence of involving Romania in the organization of the Olympic Winter Games.
- Analysis of the importance of organizing the Olympic Winter Games, and their psycho-social impact over the people and the Romanian touristic industry.

## 5. Research Content

Due to its implications, tourism is a means of diversity of the economic structure, through the creation of a branch of its own: the industry of leisure, cable transportation, traditional production, but in the same time, it contributes to the development and modernisation of the existent branches. Tourism positively influences employment, the action amplifying through the Olympic Winter Games, which will have a positive psycho-social effect on the people, especially in this period of economic crisis, when people lose their jobs. The complexity of the touristic industry determines the apparition of a multitude of operations which can not be mechanised, but only handmade. Within the process of touristic arrangement, an important phase is the one of the delimitation of touristic

areas, according to the existent resources, and, on this basis, the determination of the dominant profile of each perimeter through the SWOT analysis – the area of the Prahova Valley is an undertaken and necessary process.

**This research has been undertaken in several stages:**

**Stage I. SWOT Analysis – The Prahova Valley area:**

**1. Strengths.** The strong points of the touristic potential from the Prahova Valley are represented by the natural touristic resources, such as the antropic ones. **Touristic natural resources are made from:** the varied range of touristic natural sites: areas where one can ski, hiking and alpinism paths, valleys and cascades; the tempered climate; the existence of numerous natural reservations; the hydrograph chart of the area; the refurbishing of the *Peștera* hotel, of the *Cota 1400* hotel, and of the touristic chalet *Cuibul Dorului*, etc. **The antropic touristic resources are represented by:** touristic equipment; existent accommodation; means of touristic transportation; leisure structures; the existence of both Romanian and foreign tourists.

**2. Weaknesses.** The weak points of the tourism in this area are: the lack of tourism advertising and of information regarding certain touristic; the lack of investment; the level of degradation; the existence of a large number of welcome structures; weakly developed means of access and touristic transportation; the reduced of cable transportation and the lack of modernisation; a small number of leisure structures; the reduced validation of the touristic potential; the weak quality of services, pollution.

**3. Opportunities.** Opportunities are presented by the possibilities of taking advantage of the touristic potential in a certain area. Along the Prahova Valley, we find numerous opportunities, through which: road rehabilitation, reconditioning the cable transportation installations; rearrangement of ski tracks from Sinaia and Predeal, in such a manner as to lift them to international standards; the development of business and meetings tourism in touristic resorts, etc.

**4. Threats.** These threats are represented by the risks which appear and can become weak points of a certain tourism area. In the Prahova Valley, these are represented by the following: soil, water and air pollution; the lack of special organisms; age and deterioration of some cable means of transportation; high prices as compared to the offered services; the lack of advertising programs for the Prahova Valley tourism.

**Stage II. The analysis and interpretation of the recorded data. After the SWOT analysis – the area of the Prahova Valley – we took into consideration the reference indicators** according to the data in Tables no. 1, 2, 3 and Graph no. 1, regarding: the length of the ski track ( $l$ ) – m; the correction coefficient ( $K_c$ ); the categories of skiers; the angle of the ski tracks presented and the debit of people/hour/meters of the ski track, the width of the ski track (as presented by Erdeli G & Gheorghilaș A in *Touristic Arrangements*, 2007, p. 96, 97, 98), according to the data registered in tables and charts, these having an important role for future actions.

Table No. 1. Calculus of the correction coefficient  $K_c$  for ski tracks of different width

Reference indicators	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Ski track width ( $l$ ) – m-	15	20	30	40	50	60	100	150	200	250	350
Correction coefficient ( $K_c$ )	0,50	0,67	1,00	1,33	1,67	2,00	3,53	5,00	6,67	8,33	10,00

Source: (quoted after Erdeli G., Gheorghilaș A., *Touristic Arrangements*, University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 96)

Table No. 2. Value of “s” and of

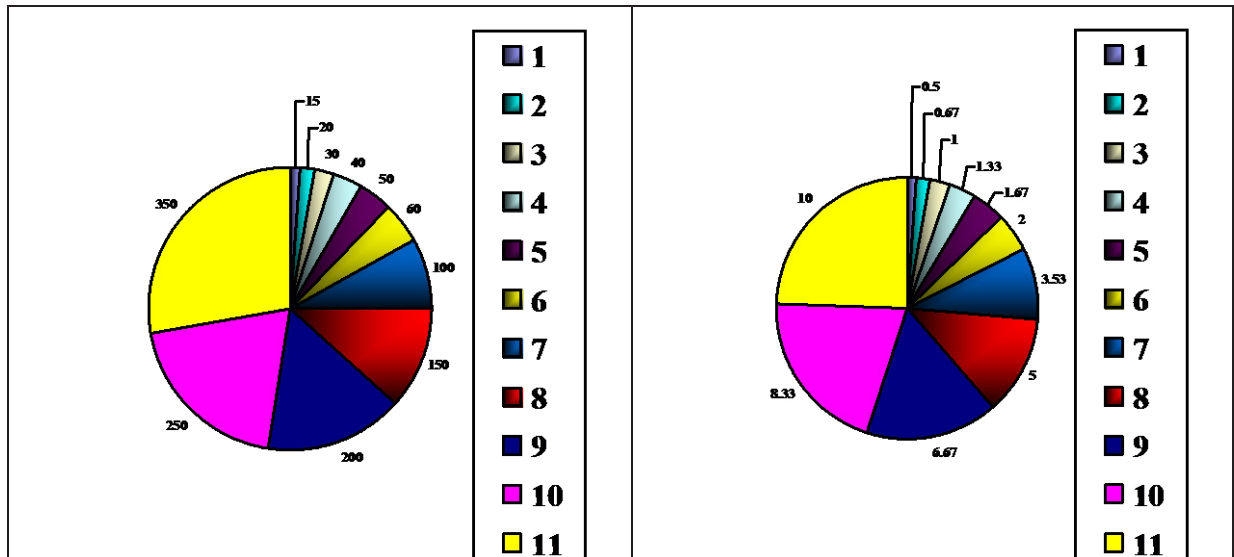
“sin  $\alpha$ ” for skiers categories

Table No. 3. The debit of a ski track

Skiers categories	S (mp)	Sin $\alpha$	Track angle	The debit of the ski track (people/hour/m track width)
Proficient	1000	0,30		
Good	600	0,25	Under 45%	9 – 12
Advanced	400	0,20	Over 45%	5 – 8
Beginners	300	0,15		

Source: (quoted after Erdeli G., Gheorghilaș A., *Touristic Arrangements*, University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 97 – table No. 2 and p. 98 – table No. 3)

Ski track width ( $l$ ) = m.	Correction coefficient ( $K_c$ )
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Graph nr.1. Representing our interpretation for the statistical indicators from Table No. 1 regarding the calculus of the correction coefficient (Kc) for different ski tracks and their width in metres (m.)

### Stage III. Capitalising the area of Braşov– the Prahova Valley before the Olympic Winter Games.

According to the regulations of IOC, both the competitive and non-competitive facilities have to be finished two years before organizing the Olympic Winter Games, period in which these facilities will be tested by the committee in order to establish their conformity with the IOC standards and the modifications which have to be done, for a proper development of the competition. A good manner of testing facilities regarding the **psycho-social impact** is the organization of world championships for winter sports, event which will attract a series of advantages with a strong psycho-social impact: capitalizing the touristic potential of the area, through the advertisement of the touristic offer, creating work opportunities; attracting new investors. In Romania, the Romanian Olympic Sport Committee (ROSC), has applied in the name of the country, for the organization of the European Olympic Youth Festival, winter edition 2013, which implies a better *rehearsal* for Romania before applying for the Olympic Winter Games. EOYF will be hosted in Braşov and in the resorts along the Prahova Valley between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February, 2013. At this event, 4000 juniors from 45 countries will participate. Other activities with psycho-social influence should be planned each year, under the form of a Cultural Olympic event, (starting with 2018-2021), with different themes for each year and with different locations, which will describe the history of the Romanian people. This means the transmission of an important cultural material, regarding the **psycho-social impact**, history, geography, the people, culture and occasional events, through which Romania would contribute at the world development and scientific progress (**Important – we mention that the numeric indicators from the paper have been taken from this site** -[http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turismul\\_%C3%AEn\\_Rom%C3%A2nia](http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turismul_%C3%AEn_Rom%C3%A2nia) and that they represent a researched and based on scientific arguments reality by the field specialists, and for these data we bring arguments of our own, through a questionnaire with ten items, applied on one hundred active people, aged 18 to 56, regarding the psycho-social impact on the people, as a consequence of the involvement of Romania in the organization of the Olympic Winter Games.

**Stage IV. Applying the questionnaire on a randomly chosen group of one hundred (100) individuals. Results obtained and their interpretation:** The indicators regarding the identification of the psycho-social impact factors on the people concerning the involvement of Romania in the organization of the Olympic Winter Games, according to the data from Table No. 4, confirms the hypothesis according to which, due to the world economic crisis, the realisation of a connection sports-tourism will bring a new perspective, with a **favourable psycho-social impact** on the people, due to the organization of big sports events, which can influence the living conditions, although profit is no longer guaranteed. In spite of this, *bluffing* application could bring great image benefits.

Table No. 4. Observation protocol regarding the identification of the psycho-social impact factors on the people, as a consequence of the involvement of Romania in the organization of the Winter Olympic Games

Items from the questionnaire regarding the involvement of Romania in the organization of the Olympic Winter Games and the psycho-social impact on the people	Answer in%
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	Yes	No
1. Is tourism a way of diversifying the economic structure through the creation of a separate branch of its own?	90%	10%
2. Are you satisfied by the touristic services from our country?	40%	60%
3. How about the quality of mountain installations for practicing winter sports?	45%	55%
4. Is there a link between tourism and sports?	98%	2%
5. Could these two fields together bring image and employment benefits for the Romanian people?	98%	2%
6. Will organizing the Olympic Winter Games by Romania have a positive psycho-social effect on the population, especially in this period of crisis, when the rate of unemployment is rising?	85%	15%
7. Does the organization of world championships for winter sports attract a series of economic and social advantages for Romania?	75%	25%
8. Which are these?	I do not know	
9. Which other advantages do you see?	75% answered: taking advantage of the touristic potential of the area 80% - creating job opportunities	20% attracting new investors
10. Do you consider that after the organization of the Olympic Winter Games by Romania, life quality could increase?	92%	8%

## Conclusions

- The study undertaken on the Romanian touristic market proves that, for our country, tourism and sport are a great chance for the people's development and well-being, which imposes to be taken advantage from as much as possible at the beginning of this millennium, and the organization of the Olympic Winter Games does not need a financial effort as great as the one needed to organize the Olympic Summer Games.
- World economic crisis brings a new perspective of the organization of important sports events, although profit is no longer guaranteed. In spite of this, *bluffing* application could bring great image benefits.
- The countries that organize the Olympic Games can benefit from it financially, for their image, can create working places for the people, but the losing countries can as well have the benefits, and they do not have to make expenses. (according to the data from [www.financiarul.com/articol/25137](http://www.financiarul.com/articol/25137))
- The number of those involved in the touristic activity is growing bigger, thus the tourism contributing to a decrease of the unemployment rate, diminishing, in the same time, the negative effects which derive from this aspect, resulting an optimist-positive psycho-social impact.
- Hosting the EOYF in 2013 and the Olympic Winter Games in 2022 will serve as a catalyst for fulfilling the objectives of transforming the area Braşov – Prahova Valley from a national destination into an external one, for the practice of winter games.
- The involvement of Romania in the organization of the Olympic Winter Games, according to the data from Table No. 4, confirms the hypothesis according to which, due to the world economic crisis, the realisation of a connection sports-tourism will bring a new perspective, with a **favourable psycho-social impact** on the people, due to the organization of big sports events, which can influence the living conditions, although profit is no longer guaranteed. In spite of this, *bluffing* application could bring great image benefits.
- In the case of organizing a world competition, as the Olympic Games are, we can have a psycho-social impact, worth to be taken into consideration, reason for which we believe that choosing the location is a basic element in the event agenda and the implication of our country will be of a high importance for Romania and its people.

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